THE COURT OF ADULTERY.

THE SIXTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

[Price Two Shillings.]

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THE COURT OF ADULTERY: A VISION.

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" ——————— Oh! why did God,
" Creator wiſe! that peopled higheſt heaven
" With Spirits maſculine, create at laſt
" This novelty on earth, this fair defect
" Of Nature? ———————
" ——————— This miſchief had not then befall'n,
" And more that ſhall befall, innumerable
" Diſturbances on earth through female ſnares
" And ſtrait conjunction with the ſex."

MILTON.

LONDON:

Printed for M. SMITH; and Sold by the Bookſellers in the STRAND, at TEMPLE-BAR, FLEET-STREET, and PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

MDCCLXXVIII.

THE COURT OF ADULTERY:

A VISION.

THE SIXTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

" ——— Oh! why did God,
" Creator wise! that peopled highest heaven
" With Spirits masculine, create at last
" This novelty on earth, this fair defect
" Of Nature? ———
" ———
" And render compliance with the sex."

Milton.

LONDON:

Printed for M. SMITH; and Sold by the Booksellers in the Strand, &c.

TO THE

PUBLIC.

THE Author of the following ſheets was at Court on that day when every Engliſhman would wiſh by his preſence to pay a compliment to the Beſt of Kings. The fatigue of a croud ſent him home thoroughly tired, where ſleep ſoon took poſſeſſion of his ſenſes yet bewildered with the varieties of the Drawing-Room, which gave occaſion to the following Viſion: as ſuch he preſents it to the Public, and hopes the candid Reader will pardon the general ſterility, as well as particular inaccuracies of it, and conſider that it is a Dream, or rather a fragment of a Dream.

" In mercy ſpare us, when we do our beſt
" To make as much waſte paper as the reſt."

SPEC. vol. v.

THE

COURT OF ADULTERY.

——METHOUGHT, enthron'd on high
Sat *England*'s QUEEN in aweful majesty.
Her seat three kindred Gods uphold in air,
Whose emblematic forms their names declare:
This side supported by a maiden Youth,
Whose naked charms bespeak ingenuous *Truth*;

The

The golden ſcales on that ſo equal ſeem,
'Tis *Juſtice* only holds the ſtedfaſt beam:
In front an holy Maid with brow ſerene,
Mercy her name, ſupports the aweful Queen.
L-D blows the trump, and L--Y beats the drum;
Surrounding myriads to the judgement come.
Serene the air, and ſilent all around;
E'en Zephyrs ſeem to liſten to the ſound.
Thus ſpeaks the Queen: "Adult'rous race, draw near!"
And herald T--D echoes thrice, "Draw near!"
Encircling crouds preſs forward to the throne,
When thus the Youth proclaims th' eternal doom.
"Long has our flag triumphant rul'd the ſeas,
"And proſtrate Kings obey'd our dread decrees;

"From

" From *Andaluſia*'s rock to *India*'s ſhore
" Both Arts and Arms confirm'd our ſov'reign pow'r.
" Now view the ſad reverſe; hear War's alarms;
" On ev'ry ſide advance the adverſe arms.
" *Britannia*'s foes the Eaſtern Phœbus lights,
" On *Britain*'s num'rous foes the Weſtern ſets.
" The angry Gods on you adult'rous race
" Pour down this vengeance, and our arms diſgrace:
" Hear then your doom—The ſacred embers riſe,
" And one muſt fall the common ſacrifice.
" There burns the altar, here your cauſes plead,
" The deepeſt guilt the common victim bleed."
Thus ſpake the Youth, and thrice he bow'd his head:
A gen'ral fear the trembling croud o'er-ſpread.

Firſt modeſt A--R roſe, and bluſhing ſaid,
(For A--R bluſhes in perpetual red)
" If ſin can venial be, ſure A--R's muſt,
" Whom ne'er ambition urg'd, but genuine luſt."
Scarce had ſhe ſpoke——With all the pride of B——
Imperious P--y roſe, and urg'd her ſuit.
" If luſt be venial, paſſion be a plea,
" Adult'ry's ſelf muſt ſtand excus'd in me;
" Me, who, ere *England* bow'd to STEWART's race,
" From B——s notorious ſtock my lineage trace.
" Old age to my embrace no pride e'er join'd;
" Round luſty youth alone my limbs have twin'd:
" No Star, no Title, revell'd in my arms;
" My humble luſt ſought only *naked charms*.

" 'Tis true, ye Fair, ambition bad me wed,
" But brought its puniſhment in P - - 's bed.
" If love, deſpair, if paſſion plead for life,
" Think, though I err'd, I err'd a Maiden Wife."

" A Maiden Wife!" cries M - - d's hackney'd Jade,
" What! treat a Huſband with a maid-nh--d!
" Triumphant *Ton*, ſuch grov'ling thoughts diſcard,
" And ev'ry Maiden Bride meet your reward.
" Scarce dirty ALNW--K's dirtieſt wench but knew
" Some feeble efforts due alone to you.
" Each ſoft embrace in vain your charms diſplay'd;
" He ſhunn'd thoſe charms——becauſe you was a Maid.
" Theſe be our diff'rent fates: to die be thine,
" Nor add one glory to the P - - y line;

" While

" While great exploits recording M - - D's name
" To lateſt times ſhall chronicle my fame.
" My various loves each ſofter muſe ſhall ſing,
" And tell how P - - NS feaſted D - - k's K—;
" To vig'rous D - - T how reſign'd her charms;
" How caught ambition in her F-TZR-Y's arms.
" Ambition, ſacred name! myſterious ſpring
" Of fame, diſgrace, vice, virtue, ev'ry-thing!
" Rous'd by thy ſoaring fires, I firſt was led
" To G - - N's couch, to D - - T's luſtful bed;
" And guided ſtill by thy auſpicious flame
" Have ſmuggled honeſty and M - - D's name.
" Thy fickle fires were G - - N's ſecret ſpring
" Firſt to endanger, then deſert his K—,

" Warm'd

" Warm'd by thy genial heat, methinks I feel
" Courage to bear, ſin to deſerve, the ſteel;
" Plunge, plunge it deep, and rouſe the altar's flame,
" And with the riſing ſmoke riſe M--D's name:
" She nobly ſins who glories in her ſhame."
Dumb admiration ſeiz'd the gaping throng,
To hear ſuch courage from a female tongue.

Thrice D--Y roſe, but D--Y's unripe face
Betray'd, alas! remains of childiſh grace.
The Gothic bluſh ſhe thrice ſuppreſt in vain,
While B--D ſcorn'd, and T--HE mock'd her pain.
Her fault'ring voice in broken accents told
Of ſlighted paſſions, and of Maidens ſold;

Of ugly Huſbands, and of Lover's charms;
Then fell and fainted into D--T's arms.
By various *grins* the wond'ring croud expreſs
Their various excellence in wantonneſs.
In ready ſmiles the S--ES all declare,
If not a W----ſh, yet a *Ton*-iſh air:
E'en V--N's *maiden* cheeks no mod'rate ſneer
Diſtends, while T--HE gapes from ear to ear.
Entendres now in open vollies fly,
And jokes on jokes with thund'ring torrents vie.
T--D had ſmil'd, but T--D rules with ſkill
Muſcles obedient to a tyrant's will.
D--R, M--N, and M--RT's matchleſs Dame,
Who knows not what a bluſh is, but by name,

With

With H - - T's front, which Wh--edom's public ſchool
Hath practis'd well in *Ton*'s unerring rule,
Preſs on the fainting Fair; reproaches loud
Ruſh undiſtinguiſh'd from the ſneering croud;
Till B - - D's, haughty B - - D's, louder tongue
Riſes ſuperior to the buzzing throng;
Pride in her ſtately ſtep, ſcorn in her eye,
Her tongue thus tells her mind's depravity:
" Riſe, D - - Y, riſe, nor let a bluſh diſgrace
" The finer features of a *Ton*-iſh face:
" I long, like you, was chaſte; but now behold
" A modiſh wife, wh--e, game---r, ch--t, and ſcold:
" But I nor bluſh, nor fear the dread decree;
" Want pleads for me, and want's a pow'rfull plea.

" Then

" Then you, my D--, no aſſiſtance need;
" Six Executions ſure a pardon plead.
" Riſe then, my Fair, and, by a Siſter's fate,
" Learn to be happy, and to bleſs your ſtate.
" Gild but the tops, your Huſband's choiceſt care
" Will be his horns, while you the breeches wear."

A---R next, methought, with modeſt mien
Survey'd the croud, and thus approach'd the Queen.
" 'Tis here the dagger points;" —and bar'd her breaſt —
" 'Tis I muſt fall, —'tis I muſt ſave the reſt.
" Bluſh, bluſh, ye Fair, and hear the guilty tale;
" Abhor my ſin, and hither plunge the ſteel.
" Full well ye Lovers knew, full well ye Fair,
" The force of innocence, and Fanny's air;

" When

" When flatt'ry's incenſe emulation fir'd,
" While Women envy'd, and while Men admir'd;
" When each new bluſh gave love ſome new alarms,
" And conſcious merit aided nature's charms:
" Not fam'd *Arcadia*'s plains could boaſt a Dame
" More great in beauty, or more high in fame:
" Such M--s was—Good Gods! how chang'd my fate!
" Is there a wretch ſo miſerably great?
" Return, ye tranſient hours of guiltleſs youth,
" Whoſe pride was virtue, and whoſe love was truth;
" Return, ye genial viſions of repoſe,
" Which honor guarded, which from virtue roſe;
" Return what once was M--RS' ſpotleſs fame,
" From conſcience ſhield T---L's endleſs ſhame.

" But whence this change? Why err'd ingenuous youth
" From ways of innocence, and paths of truth?
" Did keen remorſe, on virtue's ruins built,
" (Which plunges guilty minds in deeper guilt)
" Did want, did paſſion prompt? Of treach'rous love
" Did unſuſpecting youth the victim prove?
" Alas! in me no want, no paſſion's ſway,
" Can palliate guilt; 'twas Faſhion led the way:
" No love, no treach'ry, claims from you, ye Fair,
" From you, or pity, claims one penſive tear:
" 'Twas Faſhion rul'd, and Faſhion bad me wed,
" Though doom'd to mis'ry, and T---'s bed;
" Cold, cold T---, whoſe chill languid frame
" Might fan love's fires, but ne'er could quench its flame.

" Now

" Now view the happy Maid a wretched Wife,
" The ſport of jealouſy, the cauſe of ſtrife.

" How bleſt the Fair! thrice bleſt her lot muſt prove,
" Where prudence ſanctifies the choice of love!
" No ſep'rate wiſh ſhe has, no joy ſhe can,
" Where name of Huſband graces that of Man;
" On her no cold, no partial bleſſing's ſhed,
" As well the partner of his ſoul as bed.
" Not, M - - RS, ſuch thy fate! No parent's voice
" To curb youth's paſſions, or confirm its choice:
" Death long had clos'd thoſe eyes; not one remain'd
" To add experience to the name of Friend,
" Save thee, moſt honor'd Youth——but ſpare my ſhame,
" Oh! ſpare the bluſh that e'er attends thy name.

" Thou

" Thou might'ſt have rul'd, have taught the tender vine
" To claſp ſome heart congenial more to thine:
" But, oh! 'twas folly, folly fir'd my mind,
" And form'd T- - - of angelic kind:
" Deluded wretch! for ever mourn thy flame;
" 'Twas jealouſy aſſum'd T- - - 's name.
" Deck, deck the bow'rs, ye Maids, the torches light,
" The altar raiſe to Hymen, Love, and Night;
" Fill high the ſparkling bowl, ye Maids, I cry'd—
" Fill high the bowl, T- - - ſtrait reply'd.
" Each day with eaſe, with pleaſure paſs'd each night;
" 'Twas love, 'twas joy—but, oh! 'twas all deceit.
" Now on his front ſat rankling anxious cares,
" While down each cheek diſtill'd the jealous tears.

" Then

" Then would he ſwear he lov'd, he too much lov'd,
" And ſympathizing ſighs the tale approv'd.
" Scarce could I blame myſelf, my thoughtleſs age,
" My whims, my follies, but again he'd rage;
" Scarce could ſubmit, and own the fault in me,
" But from his mouth came doubly urg'd the plea.
" My virgin days of eaſe, my nights of reſt,
" In Mem'ry's eye ſeem'd now, now doubly bleſt:
" Yet ſtill he lov'd, for ſtill my beauties fir'd,
" But fear'd thoſe beauties that he moſt admir'd.
" Conceive my pain (I pity all who can)
" At once the pride, the fear, the ſcorn of man.

" No love now urg'd by day, no wiſh by night,
" Me to receive, or him to give delight:

" I ſaw eaſe, honor, e'en good-nature fade,
" And curs'd the laws that aught but love had made.
" Here, Cenſure, here thy keeneſt arrows ſhed;
" I ſought abroad what home and he forbad.
" But own, my ſoul, (confeſſion's all you can)
" You lov'd the Huſband, though you loath'd the Man.
" Repent the day when honor firſt could fail,
" When M--RS. err'd, and ſcandal ſpread the tale.
" I ſaw, I burn'd; Love urg'd a quick diſpatch,
" And languid Virtue ſlumber'd on the watch:
" Quick on my heart the rebel paſſion preſt—
" But let a bluſh and fancy paint the reſt.

" Now view me far, far launch'd on Faſhion's tide,
" Slave of variety, and ſport of pride;

" Without

" Without a Goddeſs; but a wretch within,
" Seeking relief from ſin in greater ſin.
" Sage B - - - y, ſay, (for thy experienc'd mind
" Well knows the ſting Remorſe has left behind)
" Say what it is to ſin, reflect, repent;
" Then ſin as though repentance ne'er were meant:
" To ſeek, reject; renounce, but ſtill purſue;
" *Repent old pleaſures, but ſollicit new.*
" Cenſure, ye Fair, whoſe footſteps never ſlide,
" Who never err'd, becauſe ye ne'er were try'd.
" But if one gen'rous heart my woes can feel;
" If one ſoft eye a penſive tear can ſteal;
" If one alike in grief, alike in ſin,
" Can weep her own, and ſympathize in mine;

" (And

" (And one there ſurely is, for C - - here
" Will bluſh, and drop the ſympathetic tear;
" Here too will O - - - y grant my humble boon,
" And weep my ſin, who ever weeps her own)
" If one, who Virtue ſeeks, and not her name,
" Nor ſcorns temptation 'cauſe no tempter came;
" (Like thee, my G - - y, thee, whoſe noble mind
" Shows how angelic may be woman-kind)
" If ſuch there be, tell Scandal's murd'rous tribe,
" Tell rigid Sanctity, tell ſcornfull Pride,
" Tell Chats—h's ſprightly Dame, tell Faſhion's train,
" How ſtrait from pleaſure is the path to pain.
" The happy Maid, the virtuous Fair-one tell,
" Within my breaſt how burns a more than hell.

" Can

" Can guilt like mine, ye Fair, for pardon plead?
" —— On to the altar then, I'll freely bleed."

——— When, lo! in her white ſhroud clad,
Cold from Death's dark abyſs, a trembling ſhade,
With one pale hand uplift, and modeſt mien,
Approach'd, (methought 'twas *D*[cannan]*k*'s contrite *Q*[Lee] N)
Thrice dropp'd the tear, and, beating thrice her breaſt,
The voluntary victim thus addreſt:
' Here, Siſter, haſte; 'tis here the wretched reſt,
' And all find bliſs, though variouſly bleſt:
' Here manſions num'rous as the ſtars of heav'n,
' To diff'rent ſouls are diff'rently giv'n.
' On Conquerors' brows, whom mercies t'heav'n bring,
' Here laurels flouriſh in eternal ſpring;

'Here Kings perpetual peace's ſceptre ſway,
'And e'en thy ſubjects, *Britain*, here obey:
'Here too can Virgin vows, and Veſtal's pray'r,
'For Superſtition's ſelf a ſeat prepare,
'And guardian angels waft the holy Nun,
'No more to war with Nature, and with Man.

'Tremble the harden'd ſouls, whoſe crimes defy
'That God, whom conſcience and themſelves would fly;
'Whoſe common guilt can brave the bluſh, and ſhame
'E'en decency with Whoredom's public name.
'This palm be thine, unrivall'd G---R, thine,
'G---R the great, the uniform in ſin.
'Not ſuch art thou; then claim the rank in heav'n,
'Which penitence prepares for ſins forgiv'n.

'To

‘ To realms of calm tranquillity and eaſe
‘ Secluſion's feeble wings her vot'ries raiſe:
‘ Such claim the cloyſter vows, and well-told beads;
‘ High ſoars the tear repentant error ſheds;
‘ Scenes of extatic joy the Gods aſſign
‘ To her, and be they OSSORY's and thine.

‘ Far diff'rent manſions wait thy parting breath,
‘ Laſcivious BRIDGEWATER, vicious e'en to death.
‘ High ride thy ſtately yacht, while hov'ring gales
‘ Fan the rich purple of her panting ſails;
‘ High ride her helm, where wealth and pleaſure guide,
‘ And make old Ocean's boſom ſwell with pride:
‘ Swift to *Italia*'s luſcious ſhores convey
‘ The Queen of Luſt, of Sin, of Bigamy;

‘ Where

‘ Where each new day ſhall hail ſome new delight,
‘ And golden abſolution crown each night.
‘ Deluding phantaſy! one ſhort, ſhort year,
‘ Or month, or day perhaps, and B -- L's here;
‘ Here clos'd in death, forgetting and forgot,
‘ In cold oblivion where our glories rot;
‘ Her ſhade ſtill hov'ring nigh in anxious fear;
“ For God, not Man, abſolves our frailties here.”

‘ S -- E awhile may rear her guilty head,
‘ And youth may ſcorn the dictates of the dead;
‘ But, ah! too near old-age, and age's fears
‘ Approach, and murder'd S -- 's ghoſt appears:
‘ The injur'd Shade ſhall haunt each houſe, each room,
‘ Stalk round each bed, and awe the midnight gloom.

‘ What

'What fears, what terrors then ſhall be her lot!
'E'en B — ſhall ſpurn the child that G — begot.
'Now worn with ſins of youth, and age's fears,
'S - - E diſſolves in agonizing tears.

'But, ſee! down Diſſolution's path appear
'Two trembling Shades, whoſe guide is cold Deſpair:
'See how they caſt a ling'ring look behind,
'Catch at each twig, and graſp each paſſing wind,
'Struggle with age; to ſnatch one hour from death,
'Would pawn the bleſt futurity of faith.
'But, ſee! they come, while deeds of matchleſs fame
'In Mem'ry's page thus eternize their name:

'When future luſts with ſuch new glories reign
'As baffle former language to explain,
'Hence ſhall men call them H - - - and V —.

'A - - - ER, thee await the roſeate bow'rs,
'Celeſtial chaplets, and perennial flow'rs;
'Haſte then where Penitence on ſins forgiv'n
'Show'rs mercies like the dews of op'ning heav'n.'
Then one pale hand, methought, o'er Death's abode
She gently wav'd, while t'other claſpt her ſhroud.
'Tis here repentant ſinners reſt: 'tis here
'E'en griefs forget to mourn, and guilt to fear.'
Thus ſpake the Shade; then vaniſh'd from my ſight,
Wrapt in encircling clouds of endleſs night.

"Now

" —Now ſtrike! I brave thee, Death; thy dart I'll kiſs,
" While Angels waft my ſoul to realms of bliſs.
" And thou, T - - -, thou, that deck'dſt awhile
" My bridal bed, ſhalt light my fun'ral pile;
" Then drop one parting tear, and gently ſigh,
" *Here with her aſhes let her follies die.*
" Then ſhall I happy any region view
" That will but hide me from my ſhame—and you.
" Long may'ſt thou live, enjoying and enjoy'd,
" The happier Huſband of ſome happier Bride,
" Whom giddy Faſhion may not tempt to err;
" And thou, e'en thou, not know one jealous fear.
" May youth and age their ſev'ral bleſſings ſhed;
" Health at thy board, and pleaſure on thy bed:

" Then

" Then long, long years, may hoary Wiſdom crown
" Thy brows with fame, thy mem'ry with renown;
" And when the envious Fates ſhall cut thy thread,
" And Death ſhall wing his arrows at thy head,
" May ſofteſt ſlumbers watch thy pillow round,
" Pour in their balm, and cloſe the gaping wound;
" And thou, without a groan, a tear, a ſigh,
" Glide unrelenting to Eternity."

THE END.